

Wel may he be sory thanne, that oweth al his lif to God, as longe as he hath lyved, and eek as longe as he shal lyve, that no goodnesse ne hath to paye with his dette to God, to whom he oweth al his lyf, for, trust wel: He shal yeven accountes, as seith Seint Bernard, of alle the goodes that han be yeven hym in this present lyf, and how he hath hem despended; insomuche that ther shal nat perisse an heer of his heed, ne a moment of an houre ne shal nat perisse of his tyme, that he ne shal yeve of it a rekenyng.

THE fift the thyng that oghte moeve a man to contricioun, is remembrance of the passiou that oure Lord Jhesu Crist suffred for oure synnes, for, as seith Seint Bernard: Whil that I lyve, I shal have remembrance of the travayles that oure Lord Crist suffred in prechyng; his we-rynesse in travaylling, his temptaciounes whan he fasted, his longe wakynges whan he preyde, his teeres whan that he weeped for pitee of good peple; the wo and the shame and the filthe that men seyden to hym; of the foules spittynge that men spitte in his face, of the buffettes that men yaven hym, of the foule mowes, and of the re-presses that men to hym seyden; of the nayles with whiche he was nayled to the croys, and of al the remenaunt of his passiou that he suffred for my synnes, and nothyng for his gilt. And yeshul understonde, that in mannes synne is every manere of ordre or ordinaunce turned up/so/doun, for it is sooth, that God, & resoun, and sensualitee, and the body of man, been so ordeyned, that everich of these foure thynges sholde have lordshipe over that oother; as thus: God sholde have lordshipe over resoun, & resoun over sensualitee, and sensualitee over the body of man. But soothly, whan man synneth, al this ordre or ordinaunce is turned up/so/doun. And therefore thanne, forasmuche as the resoun of man ne wol nat be subget ne obeisant to God, that is his lord by right, therefore leseth it the lordshipe that it sholde have over sensualitee, and eek over the body of man. And why? For sensualitee rebelleth thanne agayns resoun; & by that wey leseth resoun the lordshipe over sensualitee and over the body. for right as resoun is rebel to God, right so is bothe sensualitee rebel to resoun and the body also.

AND certes, this disordinaunce & this rebelloun oure Lord Jhesu Crist aboghte upon his precious body ful deere, and herkne in which wise, forasmuche thanne as resoun is rebel to God, therefore is man worthy to have sorwe and to be deed. This suffred oure Lord Jhesu Crist for man, after that he hadde be bi-

trayed of his disciple, & distreynd and every nayl of his handes, as seith Seint Augustyn. And fortherover, forasmuche as resoun of man ne wol nat daunte muchel to have shame; and this suffred oure Lord Jhesu Crist for man, whan they speken in his visage. And fortherover, forasmuche as the caytyf body of man is rebel bothe to resoun and to sensualitee, therefore is it worthy the deeth. And this on the croys, whereas ther was no part of his body free, withouten greet peyne and bitter passiou.

AND al this suffred Jhesu Crist, that nevere forgeted. And therefore resoun ably may be said of Jhesu in this manere: To muchel am I peyned for the thynges that I nevere deserved, & to muchel defouled for shendshipe that man is worthy to have. And therefore may the synful man wel seye, as seith Seint Bernard: Accursed be the bitterness of my synne, for which ther moste be suffred so muchel bitterness. For certes, after the diverse disconcordaunces of oure wikkednesses, was the passiou of Jhesu Crist ordeyned in diverse thynges, as thus. Certes, synful mannes soule is bitrayed of the devel by covetise of temporel prosperitee, and scorned by deceite whan he cheseth fleschly delices; and yet is it tormented by impaciencie of adversitee, and byspet by servage and subjeccioun of synne; and atte laste it is slayn fynally. For this disordinaunce of synful man was Jhesu Crist fyrst bitrayed, and after that was he bounde, that cam for to unbynden us of synne and peyne. Thanne was he byscomed, that comly sholde han been honoured in alle thynges & of alle thynges. Thanne was his visage, that oghte be desired to be seyn of al mankynde, in which visage aungels desiren to looke, vileynsly bispet. Thanne was he scourged that nothyng hadde agilt; and finally, thanne was he crucified and slayn. Thanne was acomplished the word of Ysaie: He was wounded for oure mysdedes, & defouled for oure felonies. Now sith that Jhesu Crist took upon hymself the peyne of alle oure wikkednesses, muchel oghte synful man wepen & biwayle, that for his synnes Goddes sone of hevene sholde al this peyne endure.

THE sixte thyng that oghte moeve a man to contricioun, is the hope of thre thynges; that is to seyn, foryiffnesse of synne, and the yifte of grace wel for to do, and the glorie of hevene, with which God shal guerdone a man for his goode dedes.

AND, forasmuche as Jhesu Crist yeven us these yiftes of his largesse, and of his sovereyn bountee, therefore is he cleped Jhesus Nazarenus, rex Judaeorum, on whom men shul hope to have foryiffnesse of synnes, which that is proprely salvacioun of synnes. And therefore seyde the aungel to Joseph: Thou shalt clepen his name Jhesus, that shal save his peple of hir synnes. And heereof seith Seint Peter: Ther is noon oother name under hevene that is yeve to any man, by which a man may be saved, but oonly Jhesus. Nazarenus is as muche for to seye as florishyng, in which a man shal hope, that he that yeveth hym remissiou of synnes shal yeve hym eek grace wel for to do, for in the flour is hope of fruyt in tyme comyng; and in foryiffnesse of synnes, hope of grace wel for to do. I was atte dore of thyn herte, seith Jhesus, and cleped for to entre; he that openeth to me shal have foryiffnesse of synne. I wol entre into hym by my grace, and soupe with hym, by the goode werkes that he shal doon; whiche werkes been the food of God; and he shal soupe with me, by the grete joye that I shal yeven hym. Thus shal man hope, for his werkes of penitence, that God shal yeven hym his regne; as he bihoote hym in the gospel.

All shal a man understonde, in which manere shal been his contricioun. I seye, that it shal been universal and total; this is to seyn, a man shal be verray repentaunt for alle his synnes that he hath doon in delit of his thought; for delit is ful perilous, for ther been two manere of consentynges; that oon of hem is cleped consentyng of affectioun, whan a man is moored to do synne, and deliteth hym longe for to thynke on that synne; and his resoun aperceyvethe it wel, that it is synne agayns the lawe of God, and yet his resoun refreyneth nat his foul delit or talent, though he se wel apertly that it is agayns the reverence of God; although his resoun ne consente noght to doon that synne in dede, yet seyn somme doctours that swich delit that dwelleth longe, it is ful perilous, al be it nevere so lite. And also a man sholde sorwe, namely, for al that evere he hath desired agayn the lawe of God with perfit consentyng of his resoun; for therof is no doute, that it is deedly synne in consentyng. For certes, ther is no deedly synne that it nas first in mannes thought, & after that in his delit; & so forth into consentyng, and into dede. Wherefore I seye, that many men ne repenten hem nevere of swiche thoghtes & delites, ne nevere shryven hem of it, but oonly of the dede of grete synnes outward. Wherefore I seye, that

swiche wikked delites & wikked thoghtes been subtile bigleres of hem that shullen be dampned.

MOREOVER, man oghte to sorwe for his wikked wordes, as wel as for his wikked dedes; for certes, the repentaunce of a synguler synne, and nat repente of alle his othere synnes, or elles repenten hym of alle his othere synnes & nat of a synguler synne, may nat availle, for certes, God Almyghty is al good; and therefore he foryeveth al, or elles right noght. And heereof seith Seint Augustyn: I woot certainly that God is enemy to everich synner; and how thanne? He that observeth o synne, shal he have foryiffnesse of the remenaunt of his othere synnes? Nay.

AND fortherover, contricioun sholde be wonder sorweful & angwissous, & therefore yeveth hym God pleynly his mercy; & therfore, whan my soule was angwissous withinne me, I hadde remembrance of God, that my preyere myghte come to hym. Fortherover, contricioun moste be continueel, & that man have stede fast purpos to shryven hym, and for to amenden hym of his lyf, for soothly, whil contricioun lasteth, man may evere have hope of foryiffnesse; & of this comth hate of synne, that destroyeth synne bothe in himself, & eek in oother folk, at his power, for which seith David: Ye that loven God hateth wikkednesse, for trusteth wel, to love God is for to love that he loveth, and hate that he hateth.

THE laste thyng that man shal understonde in contricioun is this; wherof availleth contricioun. I seye, that somtyme contricioun delivereth a man fro synne; of which that David seith: I seye, quod David, that is to seyn, I purposed fermely to shryve me; & thow, Lord, relesedest my synne. And right so as contricioun availleth noght, withouten sad purpos of shrifte, if man have oportunitie, right so litel worth is shrifte or satisfacioun withouten contricioun. And moore-over contricioun destroyeth the prisoun of helle, and maketh wayk and fieble alle the strengthes of the develes, and restoreth the yiftes of the hooly Goost and of alle goode vertues; and it clenseth the soule of synne, & delivereth the soule fro the peyne of helle, & fro the compaignye of the devel, and fro the servage of synne, & restoreth it to alle goodes espiituels, & to the compaignye & communoun of hooly chirche.

AND fortherover, it maketh hym that whilom was sone of ire, to be sone of grace; and alle these thynges been preved by hooly writ. And therefore, he that wolde sette his entente to these thynges,